

Godly Maturity in Global Perplexity, “What Mature Christian’s do in Perilous Times” - Part 1

Acts 21:15-17 – July 26th, 2009

- The Apostle Paul has just made it clear that he will still go to Jerusalem regardless of the prophecies about what would happen to him.
- When Paul tells them that he is not only willing to be imprisoned in Jerusalem, but he’s willing to die for his Lord Jesus, they acquiesce.

- We’re moving the ball further downfield in this chapter and Paul now heads for Jerusalem which is about sixty-five miles from Caesarea.
- It’s important to understand that, as they make their way there, they know what awaits them; peril, persecution, and even imprisonment.
- We’re about to see these early believers respond as mature believers, to that which they will inevitably encounter when in Jerusalem.

- It’s this reason I’ve selected this title for this series; “Godly Maturity in Global Perplexity.” “What Mature Christian’s do in Perilous Times”

1. They disagree agreeably (Verses 15-16a)

15 After this, we got ready and went up to Jerusalem. 16a Some of the disciples from Caesarea accompanied us

v15 Luke writes, by the Holy Spirit, that after their disagreement about whether or not Paul should go, they end up leaving for Jerusalem.

v16a We’re told that some from Caesarea join Paul and Luke as they make their journey to Jerusalem, in spite of all that had happened.

- What’s interesting about this is that they are all demonstrating one of the highest marks of spiritual maturity; “disagreeing agreeably.”

- I wonder how many of us would’ve instead said to Paul; “We’re right, you’re wrong, we don’t agree with you so you’re on your own.”
- Instead, though they disagreed with Paul, believing that it wasn’t God’s will he go to Jerusalem, they still accompany Paul to Jerusalem.

Amos 3:3 Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so? NIV

Romans 12:18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. NIV

2. They provide hospitality (Verse 16b)

16b ...and brought us to the home of Mnason, where we were to stay. He was a man from Cyprus and one of the early disciples.

v16b Those who join Paul take him to meet this Mnason, who was one of the early disciples from Cyprus, so they can stay in his home.

- This is huge and can be easily missed here’s why; “Who will want to open their home to Paul?” He had many of the believers murdered.

- Yet, in spite of his unregenerate past, Mnason, knowing of the power of God to change any man, is hospitable to this former terrorist.

1 Timothy 3:2-3 2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. NIV

3 John 8 We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth. NIV

1 Peter 4:9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. NIV

3. They give financially (Verse 17)

17 When we arrived at Jerusalem, the brothers received us warmly.

v17 Along with some of the disciples from Caesarea, they are all received warmly by the brothers, upon their arrival in Jerusalem.

- One reason Paul was so adamant about getting to Jerusalem in spite of the impending peril, was to bring financial help to the church.

- We’re told in the previous chapter, that Paul was accompanied by seven men who had received an offering from their various churches.

- The persecution of the Jerusalem church had taxed a heavy toll on the believers financially. They had found Christ, but lost their jobs.

- As we’ll see in the next verse, Paul meets with James, Jesus’ half brother, who’s the Bishop of this impoverished Jerusalem church.

- I find it most interesting that James would write about this in what may have been the first epistle ever written in the New Testament.

- Some believe it had already been in circulation for about 12 years, which means that many had already read the Epistle of James.

James 2:14-17 14 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? 15 Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. NIV